



# VINTON HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE WEEK OF 12/9-12/13/2013

- School Performance Reports
- Inside Special Education Newsletter
- Cub Scouts
- Father-Daughter Valentine Dance
- Parks & Rec Before/After School Friends
- Mansfield Teen Center

PLEASE SEE TAKE HOME NOTICES BELOW





## THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF MANSFIELD, CONNECTICUT

FREDERICK A. BARUZZI, SUPERINTENDENT

AUDREY P. BECK BUILDING  
FOUR SOUTH EAGLEVILLE ROAD  
MANSFIELD, CT 06268  
(860) 429-3350  
Fax: (860) 429-3379

December 11, 2013

Dear Parents/Guardians:

On Thursday, December 5, 2013, the Connecticut State Department of Education issued the Connecticut District and School Performance Reports for School Year 2012-2013 for all public school districts across the state. Districts and schools are required to disseminate these reports to all parents and guardians.

To access the reports for Mansfield Public Schools, visit

<http://www.csde.state.ct.us/public/performance-reports/20122013-reports.asp>. You may also find this link under Quick Links in the upper right corner of the district and individual school websites.

Included with the report are the following:

- School Classifications
- Schools of Distinction
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Computational Guide
- Guide for Parents

I am confident that these performance reports will be used by district staff to help our district and schools identify our strengths, address our challenges, and meet the needs of individual students.

Please feel free to contact your building principal or me to answer any questions you may have regarding these reports.

Sincerely,

Frederick A. Baruzzi



## *Inside Special Education*

A newsletter published regularly by Directors of Special Education in Tolland, Mansfield and Willington, with the goal of providing direction, guidance, information and support to parents and families of students with special education needs.

### **SRBI Must Happen Prior to Identifying a Learning Disability**

In order to qualify for special education with a primary disability of Specific Learning Disability, certain criteria must be met including the finding of dual discrepancy. Dual discrepancy means that a student has BOTH low performance relative to age or grade level standards AND insufficient progress even when provided with scientific, research-based interventions (SRBI). SRBI is research based, effective instructional strategies given within the general education classroom or through flexible small groups by a variety of qualified interventionists who progress monitor on a regular basis using assessment tools that accurately target a student's focus area for improvement. In some cases there may be evidence the intervention(s) has/have not achieved the desired result given a reasonable time and collection of data points. When a student has not responded to SRBI intervention, and a team suspects that a student's learning difficulties are not due to the lack of appropriate intervention, the student should be referred to a Planning and Placement Team meeting for consideration of evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services due to a possible learning disability.

### **After the PPT Meeting: Next Steps for Parents**

During the annual review Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meeting parents gain information about their student's progress, present levels of performance, and proposed new goals moving forward. This PPT signifies the end of one Individual Education Plan (IEP) and the beginning of a new IEP and it is a perfect time for parents to reassess how they can support their student moving forward.

**ORGANIZATION** is the key! File the IEP papers in one place; note the progress dates so you know when to expect a report from your child's case manager. As you review the IEP throughout the school year, involve your child when appropriate about the skills he/she is working to improve. **MAINTAIN** a regular schedule of communication with your child's case manager and teachers. **SUPPORT** your child by working with her/him at home. If reading is an area of weakness, meet with the case manager to learn what level books your child should be practicing at home. **ENCOURAGE** your child to read out loud to you, a sibling or even a pet! Reading practice has a direct connection to reading progress! In another example, if speech is the area of difficulty, meet with the speech pathologist to learn how you can continue the program at home. **CELEBRATE** success! Following the PPT meeting, it is extremely important to talk with your child about the progress made and the positive things the teachers shared with you. This will build confidence, and validate your child's efforts. Help your child to find activities both inside and out of school that will showcase their strengths, and help them focus on abilities and progress.

### **From the Occupational Therapist: Backpack Awareness:**

Although School backpack awareness day occurred in September, it is important to remember throughout the year to help students ease the backpack burden. Occupational Therapy has been working to educate students, parents, and schools about the potentially serious health effects from school backpacks that are too heavy or worn improperly.

### **Interesting facts:**

- More than 40 million students in United States carry school backpacks.

- More than 7,000 emergency room visits have occurred in a school year related to backpacks. Approximately half of those injuries occurred in children between 5 to 14 years old.

- It's recommended that a loaded backpack weigh no more than 15% of a student's body weight (for a student weighting a 100 lbs., the backpack should weigh no more than 15 lbs).

- The average student is carrying a backpack weighing almost a fourth of their body weight.

- In one study, 6 out of 10 students ages 9 to 20 reported chronic back pain related to heavy backpacks.

- The way backpacks are worn has an impact. Lower positioning of the backpack approximates the body's center of gravity and has the least effect on posture.

- In a study on the effect of backpack education on student behavior and health, nearly 8 out of 10 middle-school students who changed how they loaded and wore their backpacks reported less pain and strain in their necks, backs, and shoulders.

#### **Parents can take steps to help children load and wear backpacks the right way:**

- Never let a child carry more than 15% of their body weight.

- Load heaviest items closest to the child's back (the back of the pack).

- Arrange books and materials so they won't slide around.

- Check what your child carries to school and brings home. Make sure the items are necessary to the day's activities.

- On days the backpack is too loaded, your child can hand carry a book or item.

- If the backpack is too heavy, consider using a book bag on wheels if your child's school allows it.

#### **Wearing a backpack:**

- Both shoulder straps should always be worn.

- Adjust the straps so that the pack fits snugly to the child's back.

- Wear the waist belt if the pack has one. This helps evenly distribute the pack's weight.

- The bottom of the pack should rest in the curve of the lower back. It should never rest more than four inches below the child's waistline.

#### **Dear Ide A**

Dear Ide A,

My 4th grade daughter has an attention deficit and is not very well organized. Her IEP says that she gets an hour a day of academic instruction and support. Things are improving. I go to my daughter's PPT once every year and always have a lot of people sitting at the conference room table. It makes me somewhat nervous even though the teachers and other staff are always nice to me. Can you tell me who really needs to be at the PPT? Can I ask that the smallest group necessary be there so I don't feel overwhelmed? Thanks



**Response:** The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act '04 (IDEA '04) mandates that a team of individuals, including parents and school personnel, work together at PPT to insure that an appropriate Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed. Your child's PPT team must include the following invitees: a parent (or guardian, long-term foster parent, or surrogate parent), a regular education teacher of the child, a special education teacher, a pupil services representative (such as a school psychologist, speech pathologist, OT, PT) who is able to interpret assessment results, an administrator (or designee who is able to make decisions regarding district resources), and the child when appropriate. Talk to your daughter's case manager prior to the next PPT meeting about your concern and the invitation list. Perhaps an informal pre-PPT meeting can be arranged so you will feel more comfortable at the PPT.



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## LINKS:

[Success SEPTO  
Special Education](#)

[Connecticut Parent Advocacy Center](#)

[State Education Resource Center](#)

[CT State Department of Education Bureau of](#)

[Autism Society of America](#)

[Connecticut Birth to Three](#)



**IT IS NOT TOO  
LATE!!!**

**There is still time  
to Join Cub  
Scouts**

**Cub Scouting is for boys  
in 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grades, fun,  
helps strengthen**

**families, helps boys develop interests and skills,  
provides adventure, creates fellowship, promotes  
diversity, and is a year round program.**

**Please come and see for yourself. Join us for a  
Pack Meeting December 17<sup>th</sup>, 6:30pm at the First  
Baptist Church of Mansfield on the corner of Rt  
195 and Spring Hill Road**

**For information contact Dianne Washko at  
[washkod64@yahoo.com](mailto:washkod64@yahoo.com) or 860-450-0617**



The Mansfield Parks and Recreation Department is proud to  
present:

# The Father-Daughter Valentine's Dance

Friday, February 7, 2014

7-9p.m.

UConn's Rome Ballroom

Fathers (or father figures) and their daughters (all ages) won't  
want to miss this special evening where lasting memories will be  
made.

Fathers \$25(resident) \$35(non-resident) in advance  
or \$35(resident) \$45(non-resident) at the door.  
Daughters are free.

Refreshments will be served. A photo for each couple.

This semi-formal event is an opportunity for you to spend an evening of  
dancing and fun with that special girl or girls in your life.



**Register in Person:** Come into the Mansfield Community Center

**Register by Mail:** Fill out the form and send along with payment in full to Mansfield Parks and  
Recreation, 10 S. Eagleville Road, Storrs, CT 06268. *Make checks payable to The Town of Mansfield.*

**Register by Fax:** Fax in the form below with credit card information. The fax number is 429-9773.

Please call 429-3015 to confirm receipt of the fax.

**Register on line at [www.MansfieldCT.org](http://www.MansfieldCT.org) and click on the Community Center Logo.**

Father's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Daughter's Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Code Number

**390214-A**

Credit Card (VI/MC/AE/DS) # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby agree to release, discharge and hold harmless, the Town of Mansfield, its employees and volunteers from any  
liabilities which may occur while participating in the Valentine's Dance. I understand that participation in any  
recreational or sport activity involves risk. I further understand that the Town of Mansfield does not provide insurance  
for program participants.





# Mansfield Parks & Recreation

*Family, Fitness & Fun*

## **Before/After School** **Friends**



**Is your child looking to hang out with friends before or after school? We offer before care starting at 7am at Vinton and Southeast Schools. We offer after care until 6pm at Mansfield Community Center, Vinton and Southeast. Program is for children in grades K-8.**

- **You can enroll by month, regular individual days or on a drop-in basis.**
- **Snack is provided. Children enjoy arts and crafts projects, games, themed events and sports.**
- **Initial registration must be done in person at the Mansfield Community Center**

**Contact Mansfield Parks and Recreation at 860-429-3015 for more information.**







**Mansfield Community Center**  
*Family, Fitness & Fun*

# MANSFIELD TEEN CENTER

**Grades 6 - 8**

**Monday 3:00 - 6:00pm**  
**Wednesday 3:00 - 6:00pm**  
**Friday 6:00 - 9:00pm**  
**Saturday 2:00 - 6:00pm**

**Grades 9 - 12**

**Tuesday 2:00 - 6:00pm**  
**Thursday 2:00 - 6:00pm**  
**Friday 2:00 - 6:00pm**  
**Saturday 2:00 - 6:00pm**

Come check out the Teen Center located in the Mansfield Community Center, the last room on the left on the first floor. We have pool, ping pong, air hockey, foosball, Xbox, computers and TV's. We are looking to offer some new activities and would like to see what you would like to do here. The teen center is free and it is easy to register. Stop in and pick up a registration form.

[mansfieldcc.com](http://mansfieldcc.com)

10 S. Eagleville Rd, Mansfield, CT

(860) 429-3015